


# SECRET SERVICE COMM

A photograph of Staff Sgt. Jonathon Ramirez, a man in a dark suit and sunglasses, standing next to a two-way radio installation. The installation consists of a white control box on top of a grey base unit, with various cables and antennas connected. They are situated on a rocky, dry hillside with a winding road and distant hills in the background under a clear blue sky.

Staff Sgt. Jonathon Ramirez stands next to a two-way radio installation used for part of President Reagan's funeral.

## AFCA provides comm support for presidential campaigns, events

**By Mr. Gerald Sonnenberg**  
AFCA Public Affairs

**SCOTT AIR FORCE BASE, ILL.** – Two years ago, the Air Force Communications Agency was tasked to provide support for the 2004 presidential campaign. Since then, AFCA's Air Force Protective Communications Support Team has been busy providing that support with its 14 full-time people and 38 augmentees.

The unit's overall mission is to provide essential protective communications support to the U.S. Secret Service for the protection of the President and Vice President; presidential candidates; former presidents; and visiting foreign dignitaries to the U.S. and United

Nations. They also provide technical assistance for evaluation, maintenance, and upgrade of U.S. Secret Service communications systems at 135 field offices nationwide; provide protective comm support to the office of the secretary of defense; and provide protective communications support for international and special events when needed.

Team leader Senior Master Sgt. Gary Swanson said, "Our first task was to recruit an augmentee force to supplement our full-timers. After extensive advertising, we narrowed the 100 volunteers down to the 38 best 2Es (communications and electronics maintenance people)."

In 2003, the entire team participated

in intensive training. Since then, the group has performed more than 2,300 days in support of a variety of missions including party conventions, the protective radio infrastructure, small political events around the country, as well as President Reagan's funeral.

"As you can see, we've been very busy providing crucial support to the U.S. Secret Service," said Sergeant Swanson. "And, we will continue to provide top-notch support all the way."

Since 1968, with the enactment of the Presidential Protection Act, Public Law 90-331, DoD has been directed to provide support to the Secret Service to augment its efforts in protecting major presidential and vice presidential candidates.